The Marker Lamp

Volume 54 **Number 3** **Summer 2008**

Jerry and Al with two of our latest MMR's Lloyd Keyser #400 and David Davis #408. Here receiving there awards for completing their requirements and following through with the paperwork.

Trinity River Interchange

LSR 2009

June 3 - 7, 2009

WWW.TRINITYRIVERINTERCHANGE.COM

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The Marker Lamp

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The editorial policy of **The Marker Lamp**, the official publication of **The Lone Star Region**, shall be to contribute, wherever possible, to the promotion, growth and understanding of the hobby of Model Railroading, within the confines of good taste and responsibility.

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President's Message

by Jerry Schoenberg, MMR

Our **Iron Horse 8** Convention

I would be remiss if I did not point out that the highlight of all conventions is the ability to socialize and renew past relationships. From check-in to adjournment, the words, "How are you?" and "Good to see you" were frequent. This convention was no exception. Although a few members had other commitments, the core of our Region was again present. Also, it was fitting for Ben Pearlman to be honored in Houston.

From the get-go, it was apparent that Loren Neufeld and his team worked hard to provide us with a great convention. The facility was just right in size and had the ability to cater to our needs.

There were many highlights that stood out for me:

***Non-Rails** There seemed to be more excitement than usual with the Non-Rail group. From "do-it-yourself" clinics to shopping trips—all had fun!

***Progressive Clinics** Tracy Mitchell, MMR, did an outstanding job through out the convention. If you signed up for his entire clinic, you built a diorama from track work to detailing. This included everything to scenic a model railroad. I was particularly impressed with all the "tricks" that Tracy has learned over the years. Did you know that baking powder was great for brick mortar or First Aid tape makes great tar paper? These helpful hints went on and on.

***Clinics** The number of clinics were less this year, but I was pleased to see a large percentage of different topics. It was also great to see efforts aimed at the modeling newcomers such as Operations, DCC and Scenery.

***Contest** As usual our contest room provided a true picture of how talented some of our members are. A really big "hats off" to the judging crew that finished up in the early morning hours, and to our Contest Chair, Chuck Lind, MMR, who keeps things on track and stayed until 3:30 AM in order to be ready for the banquet.

***Zube Park** What a time we had! A great job by Peter Bryan in setting up a picnic and train rides for all. A real plus for the Houston team!

***Banquet** I thought the banquet provided by Iron Horse 8 had many high points. First on my list was the honor bestowed on Gil Freitag, MMR. Gil is one of the true icons in the LSR. The Pop Loeffler Award will now be named the Pop Loeffler-Gil Freitag Award and will recognize others who have contributed greatly to the LSR.

It was my privilege to join Al Boos, MMR, in presenting and congratulating two new Master Modeler Railroaders. Lloyd Keyser #400 and David Davis #408 have joined the ranks of this elite group. We were also able to congratulate Al and Ginny on their 50th wedding anniversary. Did I mention Steve Sandifer, MMR, was everywhere with his camera and provided us with prayer at our Banquet and Breakfast?

***Operating** Don Bozeman set up operating sessions for those that wanted to participate and the planning paid off. Most scales participated so there was a choice for all.

***Youth** It was wonderful to see our 2008 youth group having a good time. They were well introduced to the hobby and were honored at the banquet with praise and prizes. Our Youth Chair, Tom Browning, Bob Brendle a generous member with the Sam Brendle Youth Award, and the Division Directors made it happen.

***2009 Preview** Jerry Hoverson, MMR, and his wife, Phyllis, gave us a presentation on the 2009 Trinity River Interchange. Plans are well underway for another great LSR convention.

If the above wasn't enough for one night, we had a switching contest run-off, a great meal, and a short after dinner speech.

As the convention wound down at the Sunday morning breakfast, we had our yearly business meeting. We are very fortunate in the Lone Star Region to be active and financially sound. Other regions have not been as fortunate. Our membership has remained level, and we are holding our net worth constant. All the LSR volunteers make this happen and were thanked at the meeting. Dick Schneider replaced Jack Green as Director of Division 2, and Chuck Lind has replaced Bob Alston as Director of Division 4. Larry Swigert has replaced David Davis as Membership Chair. The convention came to a close and was followed by the annual Board Meeting.

Remember to put **June 3, 2009**, on your calendar for the **Trinity River Interchange** in Dallas/Fort Worth.

View from the Spar Pole

By Chuck Lind, MMR

Yes, Houston gave us a great convention again and more importantly, time to be with friends.

Jerry was a little modist in his review about a short after dinner speech. Jerry did a great job in his "Model Railroading Disasters" many of which were way to close to home. If word gets around, Jerry may be making the after dinner circut.

After the convention I had business in Bismarck, North Dakota and since Laurie had never been to that area of the country she decided to tag along. Our opening night get-together was at a Mexican Resturant. Not what I am used to in a Mexican resturant, Blackened Wallye, Boiled Cabbage? Not sure where they got their training! It did nhave one redeaming qualtity. The resturant was in a former Northern Pacific depot and a train even passed by about half way through dinner. While I was busy the next day Laurie checked out a Railroad Museum for me and we made a quick trip over one day after the meetings.

We will be heading out to Portland, Oregon for the Narrow Gauge convention. I am looking forward to this convention since I will be in the heart of logging country. If all goes well, we plan on visiting some layouts in Seattle and maybe one in Canada.

Need to get busy completing some models for the Contest Room at the Narow Gauge.

A Word From Jerry's Corner…
Jerry Hoverson
Convention Chairman

Wow, what a great convention in Houston! Those ***Iron Horse-8*** folks really know how to put on a Texas Style Shindig! All of the regular activities and a catered Bar-BQ at Zube Park where we each had the opportunity to ride live-steam trains… What great fun! **Guys & Gals of Division 8,** you did a fantastic job and certainly set the bar high for **us** next year!

By **"us",** I mean **Divisions 1 & 3**. Just like the East met the West at Promontory, **Divisions 1 & 3** are coming together to bring you your 2009 convention that we call, the **Trinity River Interchange.**
The host hotel this year will be the **Sheraton Grand,** just north of the DFW airport on Hwy 114.

So mark you calendars for
June 3rd to the 7th 2009,
and start planning on havin' lotsa' fun, LSR style!

For more info on the convention, I'd like to introduce some of ***your***
2009 CONVENTION TEAM:

AUCTION – Bill Dryden.
Start cleanin' out them train storage closets. Remember one man's trash is another man's treasure!

CLINICS – Paul Richardson.
Already lined up a bunch of them. How would you like to be able to paint a backdrop without one drop of artistic ability in your bones?

COMPANY STORE – Russ Covitt.
Lot's of the standard items will be available and maybe a few new surprises!

CONTEST – Chuck Lind & Duane Richardson.
Chuck will run the contests & Duane will be making sure the facilities run smoothly.

GUEST SPEAKER – Marc LeChey.
Marc is currently working on a couple of fantastic prospects. You won't want to miss hearing about this!

LAYOUT TOURS – Steve Willis. See one of the biggest new layouts in the DFW area. Can you guess who is building it?

NON-RAIL – Barbara Smith, Julia Davis, Mary Lou Schoenberg, Fredda McPherson, Phyllis Hoverson.
Lots'a news here. So, check out the **"Petticoat Junction"** article in this issue of the Marker Lamp!

OPERATING SESSIONS – Jim Norwood. Ever operated on a Z-scale layout? This might be your chance.

PROTOTYPE TOURS – Les Brandt.
Not to let too much out of the bag, but there is something about 1:1 steam in the works.

SPECIAL EVENTS –
Jerry Hoverson and Chris Atkins.

Your LSR Board of Directors has agreed to sponsor a ride on the **Grapevine Vintage Railroad** behind old **"Puffy",** their steam engine. This is a benefit that is available to all LSR members and their guests at no cost. All you have to do is **come to the Trinity River Interchange in June**! A special "Thank You" to our LSR Board of Directors for making this wonderful train ride possible for all of us. You'll see more details in future issues of the Gazette.

PUBLICITY - Larry Swigert

Throughout the year, you will be receiving the latest edition of **"The Trinity River Interchange Gazette",** the official newspaper of the 2009 convention. It will feature "breaking

news" to keep you updated on all of the new and exciting events as they are added to this year's convention fun.

Here's where we need your help! So, if ya' don't want to miss anything, please send us your name and email so we can make sure that the LSR has your correct email & home address and phone number by:

-Emailing it to:

NMRAMemberInfo@AOL.com

-Or sending it regular mail to:

LSR/NMRA Member Information
6548 Clearhaven Circle
Dallas, Texas 75248.

Make sure you don't miss out on a*nything*, by sending in your information **TODAY**!

REGISTRATION – Chris Atkins.

Our goal here is to make this as simple, as easy, as painless, and as flexible as we possibly can for you. We're workin' on it. More to come as we move on.

SPONSORS & PRIZES – Larry Swigert.

We've already given away the first door prize at the **Iron Horse-8**. Roddy Wilder of Georgetown won FREE Registration for him and his wife to the **Trinity River Interchange.** They said they can't wait for 2009!

WEBSITE – Chris Atkins & Allan Gartner.

The website is already online and there is a link to it on the LSR homepage. Make sure to bookmark it as a "favorite" so you can come back often for the latest info as we draw closer and closer to the big event!

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH –

For this issue, I would like to single out and recognize a handful of committee workers for the hard work they have already put in - your 2009 convention publicity team. These guys have already put in more time than you can imagine and we're a year away! The publicity team consists of **Larry Swigert, Tom Browning, Matt Latham, and T.C. Carr.** Without them and their never-ending devotion to the LSR and your **2009 Trinity River Interchange Convention,** I'd be in way, way over my head already!

A FINAL NOTE. This is not all of your 2009 convention team. There are more behind-the-scenes committee heads as well as many assistants in each committee, and we're all working hard to bring you an **outstanding convention in 2009**.

So……

See ya thar' Podnah !

Special Contest for Dallas

As I have for the past couple of years I have come up with another special contest to try and get more entries into the Contest Room.

Square Foot Contest

The rule is fairly simple on this. Build whatever you want in just 1 square foot. This means a 12"x12" area (not 1"x144"). It can be a Diorama, On-Line Structure or Off-Line Structure. Like the Peanut Butter Lid Contest, nothing can hang off the side and I am sure Duane will come up with another gauge to keep everyone honest.

So get out your tools and let your mind run wild and get something entered in the Contest Room this next year.

See you in Dallas!

Changes in the Contest Room

At the Board meeting there were some changes voted on that effect the Contest.

First, the Board has set a limit on the amount of entries one person can enter in the model contest. The maximum number of models that can be entered by one person in the model contest is no more than 2 per category, and no more than 12 total entries in the model contest. You can **also** enter photos into the contest which will be in addition to those entered in the model contest.

Second, with the decline of entries into the 35mm slide category (whats a slide?) prototype and model. These categories have been eliminated. A new category has taken it's place, the new category is **Computer Enhanced/Special Effects** this allows those people that want to do special effects to their photos a category to enter. This doesn't mean a digital photo printed out, it is modified and enhanced sush as solorization, convert to an oil paint, combining photos to make one, adding smoke and steam for greater realism. So get busy on your computer and lets see how creative you can be.

Siesta Time at the station!

Gil and Virginia Freitag at the announcement that the Pop Loeffler Award has been renamed the Loeffler/Freitag Award

2008 LSR Convention Wrap-up

The IRON HORSE 8 LSR convention has ridden off into the sunset. Despite a slightly lower attendance than usual ($4 gas, anyone?), by all accounts it was a great success. Here are just a few of the activities enjoyed by the nearly two hundred attendees.

Display Room:

This was the informal center of convention activities – home to the Registration desk, door prizes & raffles, the LSR historical display, the switching layout, information bulletin boards, and last but not least, the Progressive Clinic. Tracy Mitchell has more about that elsewhere in this issue, but I've got to say that it was one of the big successes of the convention. Tracy spent most of the Spring putting this project together, and thanks to his efforts and some assistance from an assortment of teaching assistants and "guest lecturers", fourteen people ranging from beginners to experienced modelers completed the five-session course in building a diorama, and the only complaint I heard was that the cost was too LOW! Participants left with a 12"x18" display, two freight cars, and a bucketload of experience! Tracy's already had invitations from a couple of other conventions to take his show on the road; it looks like he may have started a new tradition.

Clinics:

These are always one of the top attractions at an LSR convention, and chairmen Gil Freitag and Steve Sandifer invited a wonderful slate of 21 clinicians (10 MMRs) who presented 25 different clinics in 38 time slots between Wednesday night and Saturday afternoon.

Several of the clinics were hands on, some with extended time slots. Tom Crosthwait and Fred Bock had an extended introduction to operations which included a PowerPoint presentation followed by hands-on operation of a layout constructed specifically for LSR. Mike Barrett brought all of the materials for his students to build a trestle during his 2.5 hour session. Bob Mitchell led his clinic in making a mess creating scenery without molds. Brian Block led participants in carving stone walls and coloring them.

Here are some of the other highlights of the clinics:

Leslie Eaton showed us how to add animation to our layouts.

Barry Bogs showed us how to make RTV molds and casting in plastic resin.

Chuck Ellis demonstrated how to make scenery from plaster and paint it with acrylic colors.

Bob Mitchell also showed us how to make hand-laying track easier.

John Lowrance showed us how to make modular buildings.

Jim Long showed us how to make wooden freight cars.

Bob Dryden and Kenneth Gauger had suggestions on how to keep our cars on the track.

Chris Atkins taught us everything we need to know about Rail Op.

Steve Barkley taught us the basics of DCC using Winloc to control our signals.

Lloyd Keyser showed us how to reproduce the small town of Wausau.

Chuck Lind discussed how to build Carter Bros. cars.

Tom Palmer described MKT passenger operations in the 1950s.

Duane Richardson showed us how to weather our rolling stock and structures.

Al Partlow had a great slideshow of T&NO passenger trains in the 1950s.

Jim Hinds taught us about wire sizes for model railroads and understanding and using LEDs.

Greg Johnson showed us how to build and operate an industrial strength railroad.

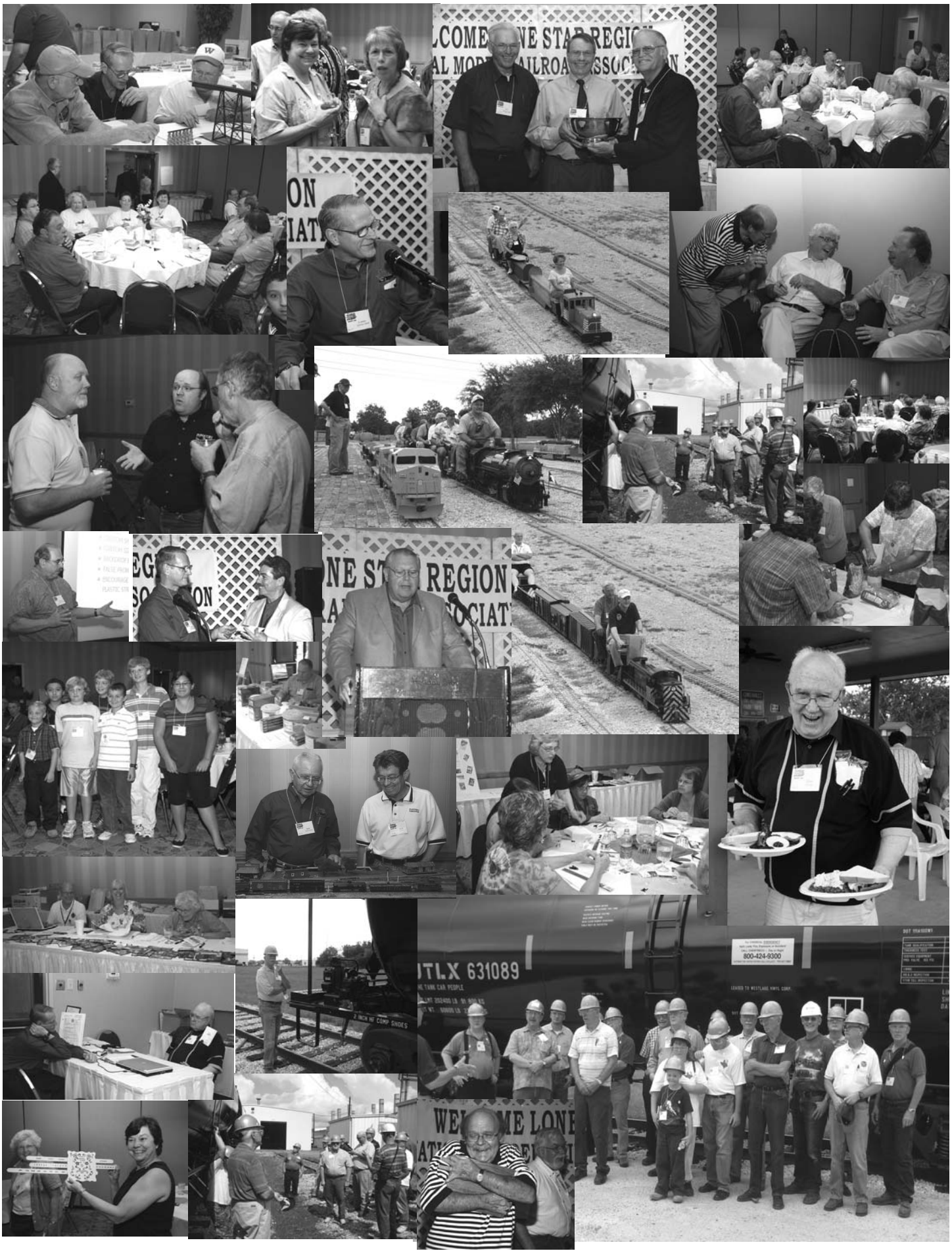
We thank all the presenters for the excellent quality of their programs. They've set a very high standard for future conventions.

Prototype Tours:

Thursday:

We left the hotel early in hopes that we would beat at least some of the heat. That proved not to be the case... I can summarize the day Thursday in just a few words... HOT, HOTTER and a Free Cap. First stop was the Rescar repair facility where the assistant plant manager showed half the group the ins and outs of repairing cars; from all reports, they learned lots. The other half of the group went on to the Union Tank Car facility where we saw flat disks of steel cold pressed into tank car heads. Then on to the steel rolling, welding, cutting, assembly and fitting tank cars not to mention the hike to the paint shop (which we passed on during the second tour).

The two groups switched locations and we did it again. At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the end of the Union Tank Car tour, they provided each person a CD with the UTLX story and photos along with a new UTLX cap which were seen around the convention activities on Friday and Saturday. Despite the abundance of water and shade, the heat did take its toll - we didn't lose anyone, but we did send a couple to the air conditioning... Everyone returned back to the hotel cooler... except those in the back of the bus where the air wasn't working so well...

Friday:

We departed a bit late after several last minute cancellations but we did manage to make it to the Port of Houston gate in plenty of time to get through security before we boarded the boat. The captain took us from the turning basin about 40 minutes to just past the Washburn tunnel explaining each of the ships, docks and industries along the way. Interesting locations were the 2 scrap steel processors, 2 refineries (Lyondel and Valero), Vopak terminal, several container ships, the Cargil grain elevator and the many warehouses where several double span bolster heavy duty flat cars showed off their loads. The return trip was highlighted by a video produced by the Port that explained the history, size and future of the amazing inland Port of Houston. It may have been a boat ride, but it was very interesting from a transportation perspective with lots of railcars visible from the Houston Ship Channel.

Lunch at the Golden Corral was followed by the short trip to the Metro Rail Operations Center (ROC) where we were met by the director of Community Outreach. Half of our group went to the operations training center where we actually drove the MetroRail simulator - a mockup of the operator's cab with multiple large screens surrounding the windows. There was even a "rabbit" car operated by another member of the group complete with steering wheel and petals designed to get the train operator used to traffic conditions. LOOK OUT ! ! ! The second part of the tour took us to the maintenance barn where workers repair the cars both electrically and mechanically. When we finished there, we met in a conference room for a presentation on the history of Metro and the exciting future for Houston and MetroRail.

On the return to the hotel, the tour captain was forced by the passengers to stop briefly at Houston Roundhouse to see what Wayne had left on sale... after all it was on the way. Several purchases were made, and we arrived back at the hotel in time for the close of the silent auction.

Super Tour:

The Super Layout Tour visited 8 layouts in 2008: Barry Bogs, Craig Brantley, All Points North club, Gil Freitag, Don Bozman, R A Vanderwilt, Craig Raymond, and Greg Johnson.

The bus was split into two groups of people and a new shuttle approach was used between a pair of layouts at three points on the tour. This shuttle approach worked well and people were happy that they did not have to wait on the bus while others went in to view a layout. Typical comments heard were Wow!, Incredible!, How does he find the time to do such amazing work?, etc. They enjoyed Barry's scratchbuilding and backdrops, Craig B's equipment & layout (even with some paper scenery), All Points North's excellent facility and operations, Gil's details and hospitality, Don's scenery & operations, Van's scenery ("just like a photo of those towns") plus the fine cabinetry & wheelchair accessibility, Craig R's "museum quality" layout and "that mill!", and Greg's industrial setting with lots of steam sounds. They had very enjoyable layout visits to some of the best the Houston area has to offer.

Barbeque & Trains at Zube Park:

Storms moving in on Thursday had us worried for a while, but they blew past Zube before we got there, and they brought in a nice cloud cover which made for nice a pleasant evening.

Thanks to the HALS folks. We had a great time riding trains, checking out the live steam, both G gauge and the bigger stuff, and just kicking back and relaxing for the evening. Steve Sandifer even provided his church bus to get some of us out there without having to personally fight the traffic. And to top it off we had some delicious BBQ for dinner, and plenty of it!

Non-Rail Activities:

Check out Virginia Freitag's article in the "Petticoat Junction" column for all the details.

Awards Banquet:

The evening started off with a rousing championship match in the switching contest, with Kelly Russell finally edging out Wayne Weiss for the top prize.

The Banquet program included the Contest Awards (see Chuck Lind's article elsewhere in this issue) and recognition of the Region's two newest Master Model Railroaders, Lloyd Keyser and David Davis, and the presentation of the newly renamed Loeffler-Freitag Award to Bob Barnett. Unfortunately (or fortunately as it turned out) our scheduled speaker, Brian Marsh, dropped a last-minute bomb on us, canceling his appearance due to business conflicts. Not to worry though - Jerry Schoenberg, LSR President, ably stepped in and had us rolling in the aisles with stories of his "Humorous Model Railroading Disasters"!

The evening's activities concluded with the raffle drawings. I only mention that because some of the loudest applause of the night came when one of the Youth modelers won the ticket for an engine cab ride at the Texas State Railroad. What a thrill it must have been and will be for him, and what a great way to wind up a convention!

See you all next year at the "**T**rinity **R**iver **I**nterchange" 2009 LSR Convention in Irving!

Loren Neufeld, MMR
Convention Chairman - **The IRON HORSE** 8

Gil Freitag and Cecil Stewart with Bob Barnett, recipient of the newly renamed Loeffler/Freitag Award

Progressive Clinic: A Huge Success

By Tracy Mitchell, MMR

Well the progressive clinic was a huge success or so I was told. A big thank you goes out to Bill Reid and Walter Pasciak. I could have never done it without them. It seemed like whenever someone needed glue or a tool they were right there to help. They also kept a cold soda at my elbow.

Also a big tip of the hat goes to Larry May who worked behind the scenes early on, but because of health issues he could not be a part of the fun we had at the convention. When Larry went down, I had guys in the area step up as a pinch hitters. These guys were Walter Pasciak, Don Bozman and Gordon Lawson. They helped paint the details, figures, vehicles, etc., build structures, and anything else that needed to be done

Thanks goes out to Ray Byer, Don Bozman, Walter Pasciak, Brian Block, Chuck Lind, Jim Lemmond, Steve Sandifer and the San Jacinto Model RR club for donating "Stuff". Gus and Diane from G&G Models also gave a large discount on the items I needed to purchase. A big thank you goes out to them as well.

I need to also thank the "floor walkers" that stepped up and helped with the techniques I was showing. They were Fred Bock, Tom Crosthwait, David Davis, Bob Mitchell (No relation, but he would fit right in with my clan), Loren Neufeld , Duane Richardson, and Kelly Russell.

Finally I would like to thank a group of individuals, who the progressive clinic would not have been the success it was, if it wasn't for them. These were the attendees that signed up… Roddy Wilder, Alfred Vahlkamp, Bud Schwart, Reba Byer, and her granddaughter Rayanna, Mike Baker, Harold Huisinga, Chris Atkins, Al Arriaga and his grandmother Charlotte, Rick Jones, Lourdes McCleary, Rod Fredericks, Lee DeGoyler and our Prez Jerry Schoenberg. Jerry proved that even MMR's can always learn something new…. like how to correct a mistake in the next step, even if the next step is throwing it against the wall and starting all over. Fortunately we didn't have to resort to that…. a quick wash of Lacquer thinner cured the mistake.

Going into this, I didn't know what to expect, since it has never been done before. With me being a pessimist, I treated this like the Titanic. Just like manning the life boats, I even gave first choice for the structures they were to use, to the women and children, followed, by the married men and finally the single men. Throughout the clinic I even yelled out phrases like "Do we need to man the life boats, and Are we still on the Titanic?" Every time I asked one of these questions, I got a resounding "No". After it all was over I asked the group, if it was offered again at a future LSR convention, would you sign up again. They all said Yes, if I was running the show. That was the best compliment I could ever have gotten. Mere words can't say thank you enough. You all made it special for me too. And Yes, I am considering of doing it again at a future LSR convention.

Now enough of these words of praise. They always say a picture is worth a thousand words, so let's see the finished results. Roll film please!!!!

LMRA Model Railroad Activity to host 2008 Circus Model Builders International Gathering And the National Gathering of the Carnival Historical & Model Builders Society during LMRA 26th Annual Model Train Show October 11th -12th

By Bob Bray

Bob Bray, member of the LMRA Model Railway activity and a member of the Circus Model Builders, was approached by CMB Lot 8 manager, Jim Stegall to help host the CMB International Gathering in 2008 in the Dallas Fort Worth Area. There are currently 39 CMB members living in the Lot 8 area, which encompasses the states of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana and New Mexico.

As a result of this request, I talked with the officers of the LMRA RR activity about partnering with the Lot 8 circus modelers about hosting the 2008 CMB International Gathering as a part of the 26th annual model RR show. Club officers believed this event would be a good fit with our train show and gives us another great drawing card for families and children.

This is the first time in history that this event has been held in Texas and also the first time that a model railroad club has hosted the event. Many of the members of the CMB live on the east coast, the west coast and Florida. Members in Texas are spread out over many cities making it impractical to have hosted this event in the past. More than likely it will never be held in this area again because we have such a small base of members. If it were not for the generosity of the LMRA organization this event would probably have not come to Texas.

The CMB is an International organization with about 1,000 members. Each year they hold what's called an International Gathering in one of the 10 regions of the organization. The CMB is a non profit organization and raises it funding through its memberships. Most of the dues go for the publication "The Little Circus Magazine", which is published 6 times a year.

Like other organizations of this kind, membership is declining and many of the current members are maturing. Like model railroading not many youngsters are getting involved in this hobby. The International organization has no funding available for hosting an International gathering. In addition, they have no way of advertising an event of this kind to the general public.

Usually the International gathering is put on and funded by an individual lot. It rotates from lot to lot each year, it is normally held in a major city in a local mall. This way the cost are very limited as the malls have used them as a draw and do not charge them for displaying while the mall is open for business. As they are held in malls, no admission fee is charged and the cost of the event is actually paid by the individuals who attend. Last year, the International Gathering was held in the Pennsylvania State RR Museum in Strasburg, Pa... (The space was donated by the museum). Mr. Stegall has approached several malls in the DFW area and found no one interested in this event. Many of the motels he contacted were not interested in being the home base motel unless they were guaranteed 100's of room nights.

As many of the members of the CMB are aging and some are in poor health, attendance at the International gathering is approximately 100 people. Members registered so far at this year's gathering are coming from all over the United States.

The CMB International gathering will start on Tuesday the 7th of October and run through Sunday the 12th. The focus is to display the many models that members have built over the years. There will also be demonstrations and clinics held during the week of the gathering. A banquet and business meeting will be held during the week just like we do at the LSR convention.

This event will be open to the public on Saturday and Sunday as a part of the LMRA train show. This is a great opportunity for LSR members to see some great model circus trains along with circuses and carnivals. Models that will be displayed will be in many different scales. Most of the models on display will have been handcrafted by the members as not many commercial kits are available for this hobby. Committed to attend this years international gathering are displays of ½" circus trucks, a ¼' scale railroad show, ¼' truck circus, ¼' one ring circus, various HO scale carnivals, circus trains and circus's. etc. Many of the display are 1 or 2 table displays. But several are very large displays. One of the ¼" circuses coming takes 3 days to set up on 30 eight foot tables.

LMRA model railroad activity invites you to come to Fort Worth this October 11th & 12th and see some great modeling from another hobby. Many of the circus modelers got started by modeling a circus train. You know how the hobby grows. What's the use of having a circus train without having a circus? I know you will meet some great people and have a great time.

For more information on the joining the CMB or information about the Great 08 International gathering go to http://www.circusmodelbuilders.com.

For more information on the LMRA 26th annual model train show go to http://www.lmra.org/railroad/railroad.html

LADIES ONLY!
Petticoat Junction

2008 LSR Non-Rail Wrap-up

The Non-Rail program proved to be entertaining in every sense of the word.

One phrase describes it…*fun*, *laughter, more fun!*

We began **Wednesday** evening with a preview of upcoming clinics followed by a fun filled game of Chicken Foot.

Thursday was jam packed. We began with Laurie Lind telling us to "pick our noses". After the laughs settled, we learned we needed to choose noses for the *Tom tens* we were going to paint.

An entertaining Book Review by James Martin of Barnes & Noble followed…more laughs!

After lunch Patti Bullard, "the bead lady" taught us how to make a gorgeous bracelet and matching earrings which most of us wore to the banquet Saturday.

The evening was filled with fun at Zube Park where the Houston Area Live Steamers provided rides on their 1 ½"scale track. A Barbeque Dinner was provided as a part of the convention registration fee. What a treat!

Friday again was a full day. We began with going to Caroline and Byron Spampinato's home for a most enjoyable "garden breakfast". They had billed it as a "continental breakfast" but it turned out to be a "deluxe breakfast" complete with white tablecloths, flowers and candles. The mouthwatering 3 varieties of quiche, raspberry popovers, fresh fruit salad, muffins, juices and coffee were outstanding.

After stuffing ourselves, we continued on to Old Towne Spring for shopping, lunch (yes, more eating), and more shopping and ice cream (yes, more eating). I must say the laughs we had helped to burn up some of the calories.

We returned to the hotel in time to grab some dinner (yes, more eating) and get to another clinic.

This time it was Julia Davis showing us how to mash "Cookies in a Jar". Layering the dry ingredients in a jar and decorating it, and including the recipe, indeed makes a great gift for any occasion.

More *Chicken Foot* was then played.

Saturday morning Norma Brignac taught us how to make cute little *wire angels*.

In the afternoon, Diane Wilson taught us how to make some very beautiful *greeting cards for all occasions*. This was so much fun it continued for 3 hours.

This led to the Social Hour followed by the Awards Banquet.

Afterwards, several asked "can we play Chicken Foot again?" So… They had to quit at midnight so the room could be reset.

Sunday of course was the Buffet Breakfast… a great finale to a fun-filled weekend.

IMPORTANT!!!: Plan and **START NOW on an entry for the 2009 Arts and Crafts Contest**.

Virginia Freitag
LSR Non-Rail Chair

"*Trinity River Interchange 2009 Non-Rail Gang is excited and rarin ta go! Them ladies is a hope'n ya'll are markin yur calendars to come and join us next year at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Irving, TX; June 3rd – 7th 2009 for best ol gosh durn time you ever had!!*"

That's right ladies! We've already started putting our heads together and we've come up some great trips and clinics. Keep in touch for details as they develop in the Marker Lamp and at our web site www.trinityriverinterchange.com

To start we'd like to let you know that the **Arts and Crafts** contest theme for 2009 will be **"Crossroads of Texas"**. The area of Dallas/Fort Worth has been an interchange, junction or meeting place since the origins for our region. Indian trails, cattle drives, railroad tracks, highways and airline routes have joined our region and our nation. Now you've got plenty of time to get those wheels turning so you get started on a great project! There are so many talented ladies out there. We're so looking forward to seeing all those great ideas come forward!

Clinic – Project Linus

Cost – None

Mary Lou Schoenberg will lead us in the construction of this "no sew" fleece blanket. The finished blankets will be donated to the local chapter of "Project Linus" to benefit children in need. The mission of this great organization is …"to provide love, a sense of security, warmth and comfort to children who are seriously ill, traumatized, or otherwise in need through the gifts of new, handmade blankets and afghans, lovingly created by our volunteer "blanketeers"." Materials (fleece and constructions tools) will be provided, but if anyone would like to donate fabric, your fleece should reflect a children's pattern and be 1 yard long.

We're all looking forward to meeting up again for a great time in the DFW area. As our plans continue to finalize we'll put them in the Marker Lamp and on our web site www.trinityriverinterchange.com. So don't forget to book it in your favorites!

Up The Track

By Bill Dryden

Here is the list of the upcoming events within the LSR of which I am aware. I will provide all the information YOU send me or I can glean from other publications, websites, etc., for these events. Additional information may be available through the NMRA *Scale Rails* and/or various trade magazines or various websites. Please forward any and all information about upcoming events or activities in your area, club, etc., to me via email at bdr149@airmail.net. Also, note that all show times and dates are at the discretion of the sponsoring organization and are subject to change. **The upcoming events:**

LSR CONVENTION:

Lone Star Region 58th Annual Convention

The Lone Star Region NMRA 58th Annual Convention will be held at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Irving beginning Wednesday, June 3rd and continuing through Sunday, June 7th. The Sheraton is conveniently located near DFW Airport. A room rate of $98/night has been negotiated. Other details are being worked out and will be added as the details become more firm — Check the LSR website. **Come all!! PARTICIPATE!!!**

RECURRING EVENTS AND MEETINGS:

DFW Area Lionel Modular Group Meeting
Plano

The DFW Lionel Modular Group meets the second Monday of the month at 6:45 p.m. in the Gladys Harrington Library; 1501 East 18th St.; Plano, TX. For more information call (972) 422-4330.

LSR Division 3-Northeast Texas Division-
Garland

Nicholson Memorial Library, 625 Austin St., Garland, TX third Saturday of each month. For more information contact Duane Richardson (duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com) or check the Division 3 Page on the LSR website

Houston Area Live Steamers
Hockley

Come enjoy free train rides on our 7,500 feet of 7½-inch gauge track. Public run days are the 3rd Saturday of the month March thru November. US Hwy 290 and Roberts Road; Times are 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.. We can always open special days for Model Railroaders. For more info go to www.hals.org or contact Peter Bryan at peterb@ppdq.net

North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs Meeting
Irving

The North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs (NTC) meets the third Tuesday of the month. Visit the NTC website www.dfwtrainshows.com for more information about the NTC, its meeting site or its member clubs. All model railroaders welcome.

EVENTS AND SHOWS:

August

16th — **15th Annual Summer Model Train Show**
Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
New Braunfels Civic Center; 380 S. Seguin Street; New Braunfels, TX
Contact Brian Weidner, lonestarrailway@yahoo.com

September

20th – 21st — **Centra-Mod 26th Annual Train Show**
Sat. 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sun. 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM Adults $5 (1$ discount for seniors and active duty military and dependents w/ ID); Children 12 and Under Free Frank Mayborn Convention Center; Temple, TX
Contact: Jim Bush (254) 542-7728;
trainshow@centramod.org or
CentraModInc@centramod.org

October

4th – 5th — **Alamo Model Railroad Engineers 20th Annual Train Show**
Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults $6 or Family $9; Children 12-18 $1; Under 12 Free Live Oak Civic Center; 8101 Pat Booker Road; Live Oak, TX Table Sale and information: amreshow@satx.rr.com; or call (210) 355-2777

7th – 12th — **Circus Model Builders and Carnival Historical & Model Builders National Gathering**
Schedule and Registration information can be found on website Lockheed/Martin Recreational Area; 3400 Bryant Irvin Road; Ft. Worth, TX Website: http://www.circusmodelbuilders.com/schedule08.htm
Contact: Bob Bray (817) 249-4965 or e-mail: brayrlja@sbcglobal.net

11th – 12th — **LMRA 26th Model Train Show**
Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 11:00 am. to 5:00 p.m. Adults $6, Children 10 and Under Free w/ Adult ticket Lockheed/Martin Recreational Area; 3400 Bryant Irvin Road; Ft. Worth, TX
Contact: http://www.lmra.org/activity.html

December

13th – 14th — **NTC Fort Worth Area Train Show**
Sat. 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sun. 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Adults $7, Children 12 and Under Free Ft. Worth Convention Center; Hall A; 1201 Houston Street; Fort Worth, TX
Website: www.dfwtrainshows.com

January 2009

17th – 18th — **NTC Dallas Area Train Show**
Sat. 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sun. 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Adults $7, Children 12 and Under Free Plano Centre; 2000 East Spring Creek Pkwy.; Plano, TX
Contact: www.dfwtrainshows.com

Minutes of the Lone Star Region Board Meeting
Houston, TX – June 22, 2008

The annual board meeting was called to order by President Jerry Schoenberg.

ROLL CALL

The following officers were absent: Division 5 Director Dave Lamberts (proxy assigned to Chuck Lind); Dispatcher Eunice Linda; Education Chair Robert Jackson; Membership Chair David Davis; and Board Advisor Jim Packer (proxy assigned to Bill McPherson).

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Moved by Jack Green, seconded by Duane Richardson and passed by the Board, that the minutes of the June 10, 2007 Board meeting be accepted. The minutes were published in the summer 2007 issue of The Marker Lamp.

REPORTS

President Jerry Schoenberg commented on various highlights of reports submitted by Board members and the appreciation of continued support.

S**ecretary/Treasurer Elbert Smith's** report showed the LSR net worth now is $46,477.70, NMRA/LSR membership has been steady and now stands at 1029, and cost of ***The Marker Lamp*** after last year's postage increase is approximately $1.22 per member per issue. The net worth increase of $4683.39 came principally from the contribution of the Round Rock convention.

Achievement Chair Al Boos' report listed two new MMR's – Lloyd Keyser and David Davis. Two Golden Spikes and ten achievement certificates have been awarded during the year.

Contest Chair Chuck Lind – Contest submissions at this year's convention totaled 108 with eight entries in the category "smaller than a peanut butter jar lid".

Convention Chair Bill McPherson highlighted the successful 2007 convention in Round Rock, and noted that they were able to keep meal and other expenses very low. The 2009 convention will be in the Dallas/Fort Worth area and chaired by Jerry Hoverson. The normal rotation of host cities places the 2010 convention in San Antonio.

Dispatcher Eunice Linda's report showed that forty-four HO-scale and 217 N-scale cars were distributed in the last fiscal year. The inventory now is 90 HO and 543 N cars.

Nominating Chair Gary McMills reported that 129 ballots were returned. The incumbent Directors at Large and the Directors for Divisions 6 and 8 were re-elected. New Directors are Dick Schneider, Div 2, and Chuck Lind, Div 4. They ran unopposed.

Publications Chair Chuck Lind reported that ***The Marker Lamp*** publishing schedule is being met with the printer sending them to the mailing processing house within 30 days of the closing date. Chuck continues to receive a generous number of article submissions.

Web Page Chair Duane Richardson noted that the LSR web site has been re-built and that it is well-received

Youth Director Tom Browning's report listed six young people that were nominated to receive one-year memberships in the NMRA. Three youth were nominated by sharing the allotments between various Divisions and the Officers/Directors-at-Large.

Division 1 Director Chris Atkins reported that quarterly meetings have averaged 18-20 members in attendance. By working on two DFW train shows, Division 1 earned almost $2000 last year. A Division web site is at http://cowcatcherdivision.com

Division 2 Director Jack Green's report thanked Lone Star Region members for an enjoyable association and noted that members always were willing to write an article or provide information for his reports. Jack extended an invitation to visit the Midsouth Club in Baton Rouge. E-mail Jack at jwg3rd@aol.com to set up a session.

Division 3 Director Duane Richardson's report noted that monthly Division meetings have grown to 40-44 attendees - thanking Tom Browning and Larry Swigert for their efforts. The annual Division meet is planned to be in the Garland Public Library.

Division 4 Director Bob Alston expressed his pleasure in serving as Division 4 Director and told how division activities have built friendships within the division. He expects that the momentum will continue under Chuck Lind with additional growth and unity.

Division 6 Director Fred Bock's report listed the three young people that were nominated for the LSR Youth membership by Div 6. Fred described a partnership with a hobby shop to provide volunteer assistance to customers interested in model railroading.

Division 7 Director Don Kimmell noted that division membership is stable. The Ark-La-Tex Modular Club makes their facility available for division-sponsored clinics. A table promoting LSR membership was manned at the NW Louisiana Train Show last November.

OLD BUSINESS

Election of Officers – Nominating Chair Gary McMills' report listed the LSR election results (noted above). Jack Green said that including the ballot with ***The Marker Lamp*** not only saved money, it saved the Midsouth Club from having two or three work sessions. In the past they have met to sort ballots, stuff envelopes and apply the division-specific mailing labels.

Youth Membership Nominees – Earlier in the year, voting by e-mail messages, the Board ratified the selection of the Youth Membership nominees.

Motion by Bill Dryden, seconded by Duane Richardson and passed, that the Youth Members selections listed in the Youth Director's report be ratified. These members are: Brittanie Scontrino, Anthony Scontrino, Al Arriaga, William Watkins, Ciera Skinner and Phillip Senneff.

Marker Lamp Distribution – In January 2006, the Board voted to distribute ***The Marker Lamp*** at no charge to all LSR members (except Family members). Part of that Motion was to revisit the decision in two years.

Motion by Jack Green, seconded by Bob Alston and passed, that the Board extend the free distribution of ***The Marker Lamp*** to LSR members for another two years.

Digital Projectors and Projection Screens – At its June 2007 meeting, the Board voted to buy two digital projectors and two screens for use during conventions. Buying them is less costly than renting them for a couple of conventions. However, the 2008 convention hotel required that such equipment be rented through the hotel so LSR equipment was not purchased. The written contract with the 2009 convention hotel allows LSR to furnish its own equipment. The Board's consensus was to proceed with the purchase per the original motion.

NEW BUSINESS

Introduction of New Board Members – Jerry Schoenberg thanked the Board members leaving office, Bob Alston of Div 4, and Jack Green of Div 2. He also acknowledged Dick Schneider, new Div 2 Director, Chuck Lind, new Div 4 Director, and Larry Swigert, new Membership Chair.

Ballots for 2008 Election

Motion made by Bob Bray, seconded by Duane Richardson and passed that the ballots from the 2008 LSR election be destroyed.

Budget Fiscal Year 2008/2009 – Elbert Smith proposed an LSR budget for fiscal year 2008-2009. ***The Marker Lamp*** expense is predicted to be higher because of an anticipated postage increase. Elbert proposed adding $300 into a new category, Membership, which was not budgeted previously. With that addition, and without projecting any convention income, the budget totals were: Income, $3474.00; Expenses, $8877.15; Net, -$5403.15.
Motion made by Chuck Lind, seconded by Bill Dryden that the proposed budget be accepted. The motion passed with one "no" vote.
Net Worth & Contributions to Conventions – Jerry Schoenberg began this discussion by again noting LSR's increasing Net Worth and mentioning the Board's previous discussions about controlling Net Worth. It had been suggested that LSR rollover the Net Worth increases into future LSR conventions. Because Net Worth increases have resulted from past successful conventions, and because conventions are paid for by attendees, Jerry felt that such a rollover should benefit the convention attendees, not individual Divisions. He suggested that any fund rollover should be assigned to pay for a special convention event, an event open to all convention attendees. Jerry asked the Board to approve an amount that the LSR would pay into a special 2009 convention event, and then to consider how the event should be chosen and approved by the Board. There was considerable discussion on these suggestions.
Motion - Bill Dryden moved: To rollover the previous year's net worth increase of up to $4700 into the 2009 convention thus benefiting the 2009 convention attendees. The motion was seconded by Don Kimmel. The motion was passed with 10 "yes" and four "no" votes.
Discussion then began on how to select and approve the choice of a special benefit or event to be sponsored for the 2009 convention. Jerry Hoverson mentioned that one possibility was a ride on the Tarantula Express train, which runs between Grapevine and Fort Worth.
Motion - Chuck Lind moved that the Board of Directors shall approve whatever 2009 convention event the funds are used for and that whatever event is approved shall be advertised as being sponsored by the Lone Star Region. Bill Dryden seconded the motion. The motion passed.
Future Conventions – Bill McPherson listed the normal rotation of future convention cities as: 2009, Dallas/Fort Worth; 2010, San Antonio; and 2011, a "wild card" city. At this time no group or Division has requested the 2011 convention. It was discussed that, although this rotation is city based, the actual location may be in another city of the same Division. For example: the usual rotation places the convention back in Houston in 2012, but that convention could be held in a Division 8 city such as Beaumont, TX.
Jerry Hoverson described the possibility of a ride on the Tarantula Express during the 2009 Convention. He indicated that in light of the LSR-sponsored event, registration cost could drop $25 to $30.
Future Convention Decals – Jerry Hoverson said that the 2009 convention plan was to offer decals honoring Jack Lemming. There are no specifics at this point and no action was required.
Youth Membership Program – Tom Browning had proposed changes to the LSR by laws to update wording about the Youth Membership program, but discovered that additional changes are required. Tom will submit a revised proposal. Discussing the funding of the LSR Youth program, Board members agreed that Divisions and the Board officers may "swap" their allotments in the Youth program.
Advertising the LSR – The subject was discussed and there was no motion proposed to advertise the NMRA/LSR in non-LSR publications.
Contest Room Procedures – Material titled "Contest Room Rules and Guidelines" had been circulated to Board members. Discussion showed that it did not contain "rules", but guidelines for contest room procedures. After discussion of this material ended, Ray Byer proposed that some LSR contest rules did need changing such as: "models that have won first place", does that require a score of 87.5 points; "unless otherwise posted", what is adequate posting. The consensus of the Board was that Chuck Lind should chair a committee including Tracy Mitchell, Ray Byer and Duane Richardson. The committee shall review the LSR contest rules and forward needed changes to the Board for approval.
Changes to Contest Categories – Because of the lack of slide films submitted in contests, Chuck Lind proposed a change to this category.
Motion by Chuck Lind to eliminate the slide film categories and substitute "Computer enhanced /special effects photographs". Seconded by Chris Atkins and passed by the Board.
And Chuck proposed to limit the number of model contest entries submitted by one person, making them similar to the photo contest rules.
Motion by Chuck Lind to limit entries in the model contest to two entries per category with a maximum of 12 per contest. Seconded by Tracy Mitchell and passed by the Board.
The mid-year Board meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held in Dallas/Fort Worth on January 3 or 10, 2009.
The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 PM.
Minutes submitted by Elbert Smith, Secretary/Treasurer.

Patti Bullard guides the class through the techniques of Jewelry Making

A full load of railfans at Zube Park

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

by Elbert Smith

Address Changes? – Please let me know when your personal information changes (snail mail or e-mail address, and other). I will send the changes to the person at NMRA who inputs LSR information. Knowing your changes, I can check the next monthly roster from NMRA to verify that the changes have been made. This will help keep our LSR info correct and up to date. Thanks.

LSR Financial Accounts

Sharp eyes may have noticed my $.40 error in totaling the accounts on May 30. The correct beginning total is shown below.

Beginning April 1, 2008		
Checking Account	**$2,940.07**	
Vanguard Money Market Accts Total	**$45,506.12**	
Funds Held For Div. 1 (Not LSR Funds)	**$1,990.67**	
Funds Held For Div. 3 (Not LSR Funds)	**$225.60**	
Total LSR Net Worth – All Accounts		**$46,229.92**
Checking Account Income		
Ad, Dealer	**20.00**	
Ad, Pike	**176.00**	
Cars	**3.70**	
NMRA Dues Received	**69.85**	
Sam Brendle Scholarship	**500.00**	
Subscription	**12.00**	
Vanguard MM (CD Fund)	**237.47**	
Vanguard MM (Convention Fund)	**68.34**	
Subtotal	**$1087.36**	
Checking Account Disbursements		
Achievement	**65.31**	
Board Meetings	**9.20**	
Contest	**243.79**	
Decals	**142.00**	
Division 1 Expense	**30.30**	
Dues – NMRA	**76.85**	
Dues Overpayment	**6.00**	
Historian	**9.74**	
Marker Lamp Print & Mail	**1,226.06**	
President Expenses	**119.08**	
Sam Brendle Scholarship	**500.00**	
Sec-Treas Expenses	**12.75**	
Taxes-IRS	**127.15**	
Web Site	**49.50**	
Youth Program	**72.00**	
Subtotal	**2,689.73**	
Ending June 30, 2008		
Checking Account	**$1,337.70**	
Vanguard Money Market Accts Total	**$45,506.12**	
Funds Held For Div. 1 (Not LSR Funds)	**$1,960.37**	
Funds Held For Div. 3 (Not LSR Funds)	**$225.60**	
Total LSR Net Worth – All Accounts		**$44,657.85**

Total NMRA/LSR Membership inside the LSR area on June 30 was 1028. Two years ago, the total NMRA/LSR membership inside the LSR was 1014.

New Members – Please take note of these 25 new NMRA/LSR members. They're listed alphabetically by state and by city, and their Division number is shown, to help identify those who live in your area. When you run into them, say hello, and invite them to attend your model-railroading activities

Louisiana

Michael Moore, River Ridge, 02

Texas

Jack Placek, Addison, 03
Jonathan Moore, Aubrey, 01
Greg Jones, Dallas, 03
Audrey Pincu, Dallas, 03
Thomas Stephens, Desoto, 03
Wayne Sweeney, Dickinson, 08
Leonard Siemantel, Garland, 03
Chris Siemantel, Garland, 03
Norman Patrick, Grand Prairie, 03
David Cummings, Groves, 08
Ciera Skinner, Helotes, 06
Roger Thompson, Houston, 08
Gary Abramski, Houston, 08
Blaish Heaney, Houston, 08
Richard Bauman, Katy, 08
Larry Stultz, Melissa, 03
Bob Thomason, Mesquite, 03
Art Cappon, Plano, 03
Ronald Timm, Richardson, 03
Michael Carter, Rockwall, 03
Al Arriaga, San Antonio, 06
William Watkins, San Antonio, 06
Paul Vinson, San Antonio, 06
William Swayne, Wylie, 03

Due to space constraints a complete listing of the winners in the Contest Room will be in the next issue.
Sorry for the delay

Youth Membership Program for 2007/2008

By Tom Browning, LSR Youth Chair

I am pleased to announce we have five youths that have been nominated and approved by the LSR Board of Directors for the year 2007/2008. Those youths are:

Division 3 and Division 1 (combined):

Brittanie Scontrino of Plano, Texas
Andrew Scontrino of Plano Texas

Division 6, Division 5 and Board of Directors (combined):

Ciera Skinner of Helotes, Texas
William Watkins of San Antonio, Texas
Al Arriaga of San Antonio, Texas

Division 8

Phillip Senneff of Houston, Texas

Enlisting young people into our hobby and the National Model Railroad Association becomes more and more important to extend our legacy. Each one of us should make a concerted effort to find a youth in our respective Divisions and get the Division Director to nominate that youth for a free, one-year membership to the NMRA. The benefits to the youth are many and obvious and the benefits to the NMRA/LSR are that of giving our youth the opportunity to learn what we all have found to be such a wonderful hobby. To become familiar with the specific rules of nominating a youth please visit the LSR website at http://www.lonestarregion.com/officers.html and click on the "By-Laws" then read Article VI. Contact me if I can be of any assistance.

NMRA PRESS RELEASE - June 6, 2008
NMRA Patent Challenge Update: Real Rail Effects fails to respond to NMRA DCC-sound patent challenge

The deadline for Real Rail Effects, Ltd. (RRE) to respond to an NMRA patent challenge has passed, with no response from RRE.

RRE was granted a patent by the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) based upon a claim that the technology for using sound with DCC was invented by RRE. The NMRA, with the technical and financial support of a number of DCC manufacturers and hobbyists around the world, filed a challenge to the RRE patent.

The NMRA filed the challenge because we believe that the claims in the RRE patent application were not supported by the facts. The NMRA was aware that prior art and other evidence existed which negated RRE's patent.

The NMRA felt that, should it remain in force, the RRE patent posed a threat to modelers and manufacturers of DCC equipment because it would both increase the costs to modelers and unfairly restrict manufacturers who provide decoders with sound. Therefore, the NMRA coordinated an industry- and hobby-wide effort to have the patent overturned. The NMRA submitted evidence from a number of sources raising substantial questions about the validity of the patent.

On February 11, 2008, the USPTO issued a ruling granting the NMRA's patent re-examination request. The examiner stated in the ruling that there was a substantial likelihood that a reasonable examiner would consider the prior art important in determining the patentability of the application of RRE.

After the examiner at the USPTO determined that the position of the NMRA had merit and compelled a new analysis of the patent, RRE had two months to respond to the re-examination request. The deadline for a response has come and gone, and RRE made no reply. The NMRA is now very hopeful that a favorable decision will be announced and that the position of the NMRA and its supporters will be vindicated.

The NMRA considers this a clear triumph for the modeler and the model railroad industry. We are proud to have led the challenge team that has made this victory possible.

Robert J. Amsler, Jr.
General Counsel, National Model Railroad Association, Inc.
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FROM THE PAST (Fall 1983)

By Jim Long, MMR LSR Historian

LSR President Ed Quin thanked Dr. Howard Van Auken, Ken Caulking, and Jason Moore for giving so much of their time and expertise in the many years of volunteer service to our region. Jim Packer, Bedford Texas, now heads up the Achievement works replacing Jason Moore; Ben Harris, Manvel, Texas, now fills the membership post replacing Ken Caulking; and Mrs. Barbara Scott, San Antonio, Texas has agreed to be come our Historian replacing Dr. Howard Van Auken.

Bob Clarke of Schertz, Texas asked of you had lost any parts to your locomotive or rolling stock lately? He gives an assist in keeping things at hand. When disassembling a model for cleaning, lubricating or repairing, don't spend half the evening looking for the small parts that seem to vanish so quickly. Simply tack a piece of corrugated cardboard to the workbench, remove the outer portion so the grooves show then lay the parts in the grooves in the order of their removal. Then when you reassemble the model, all parts will be within easy reach and in order.

The following Achievement Certificates were John Lowrance (proxy for Jason Moore) at the Annual Business Meeting of the Lone Star Region held on Sunday, June 12, 1983, at the Kahler Green Oaks Inn in Fort Worth Texas:
C. L. "Chuck" Ellis Electrical Engineer, Civil Engineer, and Master Builder – Structures Joe Dale Morris Model Railroad Author and Master Builder – Cars Edward E. Quin Association Official James Packer Master Builder – Structures and Master Builder – Scenery

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Cowcatcher Division 1

by Chris Atkins

Hello from the mountains of Colorado. It seems like every year about this time I am writing the summer report while on my annual family vacation. Luckily wireless internet connections are everywhere, and it's just a matter of getting a few minutes to myself to send it off.

We generally try to get a steam trip in over the summer, and this year we have made plans to ride the standard gauge Rio Grande Scenic Railroad from Alamosa to La Veta over scenic La Veta Pass: the highest standard gauge pass in Colorado. Power for the trip should be SP mogul 1744.

Of course, in June we all got together in Houston for the 2008 Lone Star Division annual convention. Among the highlights of this year's convention was a trip to Zube Park to ride the 7 1/2 in gauge live steam. Another favorite was Tracy Mitchell's progressive clinic. Tracy did an outstanding job and by now, may have fully recovered from all the sleepless nights preparing the clinic.

In May, we got together for the Cowcatcher Division's quarterly meeting in Ft. Worth. I gave a clinic on beginning to use the RailOp operations software, and we discussed the latest status of the 2009 convention in Irving.

Speaking of the 2009 LSR convention, the web site is up and information on the Trinity River Interchange can be found at http://trinityriverinterchange.com. The board of directors voted to sponsor an event that benefits all convention attendees, and this year a ride on the Grapevine Vintage Railroad was submitted and approved. Look for more information on the web site and upcoming issues of the Trinity River Gazette.

Our new membership chair Larry Swigert has pointed out that the Region's email list is not completely accurate. While the Marker Lamp is official means of communication of the Region, emails are my preferred method. If you are not getting my quarterly invitations for to the meetings in Ft. Worth, please send me your email at chris@railroadmodelersor call me at 214-222-1285.

And since I brought it up, I should mention that the next quarterly meeting will be 10AM August 22, 2008 at the LMRA Administration building at 3400 Bryant Irvin Rd. Stay tuned to the division web site at http://cowcatcherdivision.com for information the meeting as it draws closer. Hope to see you all there.

Mug Shot To Come

Bayou Division 2

by Dick Schneider

No Photo no report

North East Texas Division 3

by Duane Richardson, MMR

The 2008 Convention is behind us and if you didn't go to Houston you missed another great show. Between all the layouts, prototype tours, Zube Park and the BBQ, all the clinics, the contest…it was a busy few days. Our own David Davis and Lloyd Keyser were awarded their MMR plaques at the dinner. David also brought home several 1st place awards from the contest room as well.

Planning for next years convention is well underway. Jerry Hoverson and team are working early to start getting all the parts and pieces together. We can always use extra hands so if you are interested in volunteering please let us know. The conventions website is already online and linked from the main LSR site.

We are in the planning stages for the fall Division 3 Meet. More details will follow and be announced at the meetings. This year we are moving to the library and changing the format some. Admission will be free so bring FRIENDS and make new ones. We'll have a few clinics and a model contest with a Best Of Show plaque so start getting your projects finished and plan to bring them in.

Lastly, our monthly meetings are picking up again in July. If you haven't been in the last few months you have missed some really fun clinics and the nearly famous "Deal or Dud" drawing for a door prize. A VERY special thanks goes out to our local hobby shops for the generous donations for our door prizes and clinics. We have had a large crowd the last few months and we still have plenty of room for you too.

I hope to see you all at the next meeting.

Mug Shot To Come

Cen-Tex Division 4

by Chuck Lind, MMR

This is my first report as your Division 4 Director, and while I know many of you through working on the Roundrock convention I am sure there are many more I still need to meet. Since I am on the far East part of the Division and most of the members are along the I 35 corridor, that will be the challenge over the next year. Email is my preferred way of communicating so if you have an email please send it to me at cr-lind@tamu.edu and I will add it to my list so I can keep the records updated.

I would also like to hear from the clubs in the Division and any train shows that are being held. This way hopefully I could set up the Division table at the event to try and recruit some more prospective members into the NMRA.

The convention in Houston was a great success and I expect that Dallas/Ft. Worth will have a great one like always. The conventions are one of the best parts of being a member of the NMRA it is your chance to learn from others and ask questions that will help you in your modeling. If you have never been to a convention you are missing one of the greatest benefits. Plan now to attend next year's convention.

Next month I will have a photo taken so you will have a target for your dart board.

Division 5

by Dave Lamberts

Every April Lubbock puts on its annual Arts Festival. Considering Lubbock is not that big a city, the turnout is amazing. Every year the Lubbock Model Railroad Association is invited to set up modules at the fair. We did so again this year and, once again, we were surprised at the amount of interest the layout generated.

We learned years ago the importance of taking the club business card to these functions. On one side of the card is our name and post office box, but on the other side we list the place and time of our monthly meetings. Distributing our cards at public functions has probably generated more new members than anything else we do.

I finished a two part clinic at our May meeting. The first part was last year. It was entitled "Building Plaster Mountains." I did not have time to go over the coloring of these castings, so the clinic for April was entitled "Coloring Plaster Mountain Castings." Handouts are available if anyone wants one.

One of our members has been of ill health and is selling his layout. It is HO scale (standard gauge). He has a huge inventory of rolling stock, track, and DCC ready motive power. Call me if you have any interest (806.792.7244).

Next year the annual meeting does NOT conflict with my grandson's birthday party, so I will make the meeting and, once again, be behind the camera.

Division 6

by Fred Bock, MMR

No Report Received

Division 7

by Don Kimmell

We have maintained a fairly stable membership total. As we lose a couple, we gain a couple. Duse to the vast area this division covers, (259 miles East to West x 125 miles North to South), having a meeting is a bit hard. The Ark-La-Tex Modular Club does make their "clubhouse" available to us whenever we want. We did have a 1/2 day clinic in December 07', covering DCC and basic layout construction. A number of the "local" members attended.

I have planned another 1/2 day clinic on June 26th, covering some basic DCC. I do not expect but a few members, plus some other prospective recruits.

I did have a membership table manned at the North West Louisiana Train Show in November 07'. The show organivers have told me, that they will make a table available this year. I am also working with the T&P Depot Historical Society (Marshall, Texas) to have a table at their show also in November.

Texas Gulf Division 8

by Ray Byer

Man, what a convention, I hope you and your family had fun and had a great time this year. There are a lot of people who helped behind the show, who do not get mentioned or thanked for their time and energy. So I am taking the time to do so. Thanks to the home owners who open their homes for us to enjoy their layouts. Thanks to the clubs who helped with manpower at the show and even before it all started. Thanks to the clinicians who put on their clinic to help make us all better modelers. And finally, Thanks to all the people who stopped by and asked a convention worker if they needed anything, this shows this person that his or her time is being appreciated.

I hate to see a long term hobby store close down, but retirement is something we all look forward too. Good luck Wayne Weiss, keep warm and come back and see us in the spring time next year. Again, big thanks to all of you for your time and effort. A famous man once said

"***Never has so few, done so much, for so many"***

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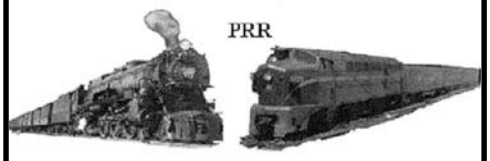

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